Global Vision for AVRDC the World Vegetable Center[1]

Thomas A. Lumpkin[2]

ABSTRACT

AVRDC, as the world's principal international research center for vegetables, has continued to expand its impact globally by introducing and disseminating improved varieties and germplasm, production technologies, training methods and socioeconomic analysis to its partners and farmers. Focusing its research on major vegetable crops as well as promising indigenous vegetables, AVRDC has started to move from addressing production problems which afflict only those small-scale farmers located in the tropics to now meeting the challenges faced by farmers in all areas that suffer from chronic poverty and malnutrition due to war, severe weather conditions, diseases such as HIV/AIDS, or which have been bypassed economically. While cereal production has stabilized since the Green Revolution, new challenges exist for populations in the developing world to improve their food security, increase their levels of micronutrients, reduce the effects agriculture can have on the environment, and take advantage of opportunities in a global economy which is increasingly knowledge-based. The Center's future strategy for accomplishing this mission will be an expansion of its research capacity, both at its global headquarters and its regional centers located in Africa and Southeast Asia. AVRDC will continue to make use of technologies that will help farmers improve their incomes while protecting the environment, including biotechnology and organic agriculture. To get its information into the hands of partners and farmers who need it most, a greater use of information technologies and increased usage of regional vegetable research networks will be undertaken. This includes greater partnership with the private sector, where mutual interests and complimentary strengths hold promise for helping improving the lives of the poor. The result will be to observe in other areas of the developing world similar increases in vegetable production and yield that have been experienced in South and Southeast Asia over the past twenty years. Such successes have meant a greater supply of high-value; micronutrient-rich vegetables that have helped build economies and reduce malnutrition.

---

1 Resource paper presented in the "International Workshop on Agricultural Technology Transfer and Its Consequences" held from 25-30 August 2003, Agricultural Research Institute, Wufeng, Taichung, Taiwan

2 Director General, AVRDC
e-mail: lumpkin@netra.avrdc.org.tw